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REPORT OF SOUTH-WIDE CONFERENCE  
OF  
NEGRO AGRICULTURAL LEADERS

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

Atlanta, Georgia  
February 3-7, 1941

United States Department of Agriculture  
EXTENSION SERVICE  
Washington, D. C.



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## CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

Alabama - P. O. Davis, director; Dr. F. D. Patterson, president, Tuskegee Institute; J. C. Ford, coordinator; N. Kollock, State agent; Miss L. C. Hanna, State agent; A. Floyd, teacher trainer; Dr. J. F. Drake, president, Alabama A. & M. College; J. R. Otis, director of Agriculture, Tuskegee Institute; Charlie Ice, farmer.

Arkansas - Dr. J. W. Watson, president, Arkansas State; H. C. Ray, district agent; C. S. Woodard, teacher trainer; John Gammon, Jr., farmer.

Florida - A. P. Spencer, vice director; F. E. Pinder, county agent; Mrs. P. J. Singleton, teacher trainer; John J. Freeman, farmer.

Georgia - W. S. Brown, director; J. A. Evans, administrative assistant; Miss Lurline Collier, State agent; Dr. B. F. Hubert, president, Georgia State College for Negroes; P. H. Stone, State agent; Miss Camilla Weems, State agent; Alexander Hurne, State club agent; Alva Tabor, teacher trainer; Miles Hackney, farmer.

Kentucky - A. C. Burnette, State agent; Dr. J. J. Mark, teacher trainer; Dan Kenner, farmer.

Louisiana - Dr. F. G. Clark, president, Southern University; T. J. Jordan, State agent; Dallas Matthews, teacher trainer; John Lewis, farmer; and Bentley Mackay, AAA information specialist.

Maryland - Louis H. Martin, county agent; and J. A. Oliver, teacher trainer.

Mississippi - M. M. Hubert, State agent; W. A. Flowers, teacher trainer; Marion M. Reid, farmer.

Missouri - Richard D. Jones, AAA; and Julias C. Matthews, farmer.

North Carolina - I. O. Schaub, director; J. W. Mitchell, district agent; S. B. Simmons, teacher trainer; A. G. Thompson, farmer.

Oklahoma - E. E. Scholl, director; J. E. Taylor, State agent; E. D. Brown, teacher trainer; Robert Partridge, farmer.

South Carolina - D. W. Watkins, director; Miss L. I. Landrum, State agent; H. E. Daniels, district agent; Mrs. M. B. Paul, district agent; J. P. Burgess, teacher trainer; W. M. Buchanan, director of agriculture; E. W. Lawrence, farmer.

Tennessee - W. H. Williamson, assistant State agent; Miss Bessie Walton, assistant State agent; Henry Terrels, farmer.



CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE - Continued

Texas - H. H. Williamson, director; Miss Mildren Horton, vice director; Dr. W. R. Banks, principal, Prairie View State College; C. H. Waller, State leader; Mrs. I. W. Rowan, district agent; E. E. Collins, teacher trainer; James E. Pettaway, farmer.

Virginia - Dr. J. M. Gandy, president, Virginia State; W. H. Doughtery, district agent; J. L. Charity, district agent; T. B. Patterson, district agent; Miss L. A. Jenkins, district agent; J. R. Thomas, teacher trainer; W. C. Matthews, farmer; J. S. Higginbotham and P. F. Skofield, Hampton Institute.

West Virginia - L. A. Toney, State leader; James E. Banks, State agent; W. E. James, teacher trainer; J. E. Jordan, farmer.

From Washington, D. C. and elsewhere: M. L. Wilson, Director of Extension Work; Reuben Brigham, Assistant Director of Extension Work; Charles A. Sheffield, senior agriculturist; T. M. Campbell, field agent, J. B. Pierce, field agent, Extension Service; Giles Hubert, Farm Security Administration; Dr. Wilder, chairman, National Food and Nutrition Committee; Dr. McLester, Birmingham; Dr. Maynard, Cornell University; Dr. Louise Stanley, Chief, Bureau of Home Economics; C. A. Cobb, Atlanta; C. G. Walker, E. A. Miller, J. H. Shoulders, C. F. Clark, T. L. Ayers, and P. S. Marks, AAA, Washington, D. C.; W. N. Elam, Federal agent for agricultural education, Washington; Jessie O. Thomas, National Urban League; J. B. Blayton, Atlanta.

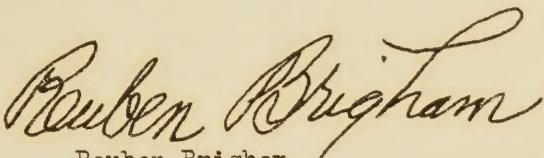


## FOREWORD

Early in February (February 3-7, 1941) a conference of Negro agricultural leaders from 15 Southern States was called in Atlanta to consider responsibility of Southern States under national defense.

To acquaint Negro farmers with both their opportunities and duties under the national defense program, ways and means were discussed for meeting the numerous changes that have developed in agriculture in the South during the past few years. Representatives of Negro leadership in all phases of agriculture and home economics were present and took part in the deliberations.

A summary of the proceedings of the conference is contained herein. Publication of this summary should serve a useful purpose to all extension workers in the field.



Reuben Brigham,  
Assistant Director of Extension Work.



REPORT OF SOUTH-WIDE CONFERENCE OF NEGRO AGRICULTURAL LEADERS

February 3 - 7, 1941  
Atlanta, Georgia

THEME:

NATIONAL DEFENSE THROUGH A BETTER FAMILY LIVING PROGRAM  
FOR ALL SOUTHERN FARM FAMILIES

Morning and Afternoon Sessions - Monday, February 3

P. H. Stone, State agent, Georgia, presiding

The Agricultural Outlook and Our Possibility for Making Adjustments  
Needed in Extension Objectives, Projects, Plans, and Procedures, To  
Meet the Larger Responsibilities of the Day

Digest of address by Reuben Brigham,  
Assistant Director of Extension Work

Last June my friends Campbell and Pierce were in Washington on one of their many assignments and while they were there I asked them to come into my office and sit down, and we had one of those talks where you lay all the cards on the table and find out what is in the other man's mind.

We made suggestions on what could be done to strengthen and reinforce your work and our work. And one of the things that they had on their minds was the South-wide conference to do with Negro farms and farm families -- men and women.

I want to express my appreciation to Director Williamson for the cooperation he has given in trying to strengthen extension work with Negro farmers and farm families. We have put genuine and hard thought to this matter of strengthening the work, making a way into the whole extension machinery so that we can do the best job possible in these difficult times. Mr. Sheffield has helped me with this program. I think you all know Mr. Campbell's efficiency and his willingness to do a job like this and do it well.

I want to mention also that I am most happy that we have not only our extension agents here, but also that we have such a good representation from the presidents of land-grant colleges, and their deans and representatives who were invited here for this conference.

We in the Extension Service are going to have a job to do for this country and for all the people, and so the real text of my discussion this morning is the simple phrase, Waste Not, Want Not. That means not only material and physical things we think about on our farms and in our homes; it means also those spiritual values and moral values which we today must fight and work for if we are to carry on successfully during the difficulties of the coming months.

We have come to a new chapter in the agricultural and farm life of this Nation. On January 15, the Secretary of Agriculture, Claude R. Wickard, in a speech at Purdue University, Indiana, stated certain principles in regard to meeting the farm situation. He gave as best he could an honest picture of the agricultural situation. And he also told the audience, representatives from the other Midwestern States, that he wanted to bring home to them the fact that they had just as great a responsibility in the problems of the South and the cotton problem in particular as in the problems of the Midwest. He pointed out that for more than 40 years exports from this country have gone steadily down, and he drew an illustration. The general trend has been downward. The only way we can find the reason for this downward trend is to meet in the way we are meeting now and find out ways of getting out of the wilderness. But it is not going to be done by a miracle. It is a job which we have to work on instead of making a grand display. We have to work with our people and get them to understand that there is a way out of this situation.

Secretary Wickard said further: "So then we come to the still more difficult question: What are the best ways of being prepared? In answer to that question, some of us will simply reply 'Reduce production.' Again, I wish it were as simple to do that as it is to say it.

"In the case of at least one commodity -- cotton -- it seems to me we must return to the action described by our term 'agricultural adjustment' -- not merely to the idea of reduction. I know a lot of you people who have been in county planning work have come to the conclusion that I have reached, and which I have stated to congressional committees: 'It is not difficult to see what we should do with our land to preserve its fertility, stop erosion, and create better-sized and better-organized farming units, economically speaking. The trouble comes when we try to place the people who would be driven off the land by such changes in land utilization.'

"The first thing we must realize is that we can't reduce the number of people who live on cotton farms, or wheat farms, or tobacco farms, in the same proportion that we reduce the acreages of these commodities. The fact of the matter is that agricultural population has been increasing because our surplus farm people couldn't find a place in city industries. It is my hope that there can be greatly increased industrial expansion in areas where we have the problem of too many people and too low incomes because of lost markets.

"As farmers and as citizens, we have a responsibility to help the underprivileged in agriculture. Requiring them to raise less cotton or other export crops isn't solving their problem. They must be encouraged and be given the means first of all to raise the things they need for their own tables. We can't afford to let people go without adequate diets. That is one reason why I say we need agricultural adjustment and not just reduction....Likewise we must remember that one indispensable element in national preparedness is a well-fed, well-clothed, and well-housed rural people.

"I refer to the field of the underfed and poorly clothed people in cities and on farms. There is an opportunity in our own Nation where we can, unhampered by world relationships and completely unmindful of the war, if you please, find an outlet for many of our so-called surpluses. In his recent message before Congress, the President named four kinds of freedom. One of those was freedom from want. With 20 million people living on an average of 5 cents per meal, we can hardly say that the American people are free from want now. Tremendous gains have been made in bridging the gap between the wants of this needy group and our highly efficient production methods. But we have made only a step. Now if we will use the same ingenuity in finding new ways of increasing consumption that we have used in developing new methods of production, I sincerely believe that we can erase this want that exists in the midst of plenty. It is the challenge of our times. And in my opinion an attack upon that problem, with courage and imagination, is the most important move to be made in agricultural preparedness."

I shall talk now about the cotton surplus. There were grown in the world last year 30,000,000 bales of cotton. There was a carry-over of 20,000,000 bales. That means we have on hand 50,000,000 bales of cotton as our world supply, of which half will be disposed of or consumed in the coming year. Now that is enough to make you think and think deeply. When we say that we have in the South a plant for producing and distributing cotton that should be taken care of, we don't want to fail to employ the people that can be employed in that industry. So far, the only sure answer we have is that we must find additional ways of consuming cotton domestically. The world supply is going to be 50,000,000 bales. And so Secretary Wickard in his statement said we have to put forth all the scientific ability that we have in this problem.

As Americans and by the will of God we must go forward in the service of our country.

Mr. Chambers of the Federal office made one contribution which I should like to bring to your attention. "Know the program; know how to present it so it will be understood; and be unafraid to present it."

A few suggestions given to me by Mr. Campbell were: Call on all Negro extension agents in the region to rally to the new plans and programs for Southern agriculture as follows: (1) Soil conservation; (2) farm products for home consumption; (3) gardens; (4) home uses of cotton in the form of mattresses and clothing; (5) home improvement and beautification.

Assure the Negro agents that every reasonable resource in the way of available information and equipment will be placed at their disposal in order that they may be prepared to render maximum assistance to the rural Negro population in the above program for national defense.

In addition to their regular duties, Negro agents can and will do a tremendous amount of good in these trying times in the matter of allaying unrest and dissatisfaction caused by persons with radical tendencies who seek to take advantage of the unsettled social and economic conditions of the people to spread propaganda and strange doctrines. This is no less true now than during the "old" World War. Negro agents can make a distinct contribution along many lines, and they should be prepared for every emergency.

Mr Pierce's suggestions to the conference are that the Negro extension workers should discuss the needs of the average Negro farmer and suggest how these needs can best be met. The Negro farmer's need is an economic one. He finds it difficult to produce sufficient food and feed for his family and livestock and some to sell for a little cash income. He finds it difficult to provide suitable and sufficient clothing for his family. He finds it difficult to provide reasonable shelter for his family and livestock. There is much need for improved sanitary conditions in and about the farm home and more nutritious food in order to insure better health for the family. Much is yet to be done to provide adequate facilities toward the education of farmers' children, such as school buildings, efficient teachers, good roads, and transportation provided out of public funds.

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#### Resume of Extension Work With Negroes

Negro State agents in reporting on activities showed that much progress was made in 1940 despite many handicaps.

Progress has been made in all major projects, and increased emphasis has been placed on the home production of food and feed and on the economic security of the farm family. There has been an increase in personnel, livestock, poultry, home gardens, rural housing, and 4-H Club work. Training of leaders has been emphasized; landlord and tenant relations have been improved; and a larger number of people

have been reached through community organization. Negroes have cooperated in the mattress-making program; some States report as many as 75,000 mattresses made by Negro farmers and homemakers under the supervision of Negro agents.

It was the consensus of all State workers that the AAA garden payments last year contributed greatly to the garden program.

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Morning Session - Tuesday, February 4

C. H. Waller, State leader, Texas, presiding

What Is the Supervisor's Job Today?

Chas. A. Sheffield  
Field Agent, Federal Extension Service

Definition of administrator: One who directs, manages, executes, or dispenses, whether in civil, judicial, or political affairs. Definition of supervisor: An overseer placed in a superior position where he can watch, guide, and improve the work of others.

Objectives of supervision: (1) Installing an agent in the Service from the standpoint of the agent's understanding of: (a) The objectives of extension work; (b) procedures to be followed (determination of program planning, executing, and reporting); (c) standards to be attained. (2) Studying the strong and weak points of the agents supervised; building on the strong points and assisting in correcting the weak ones. (3) Recognizing good extension procedures and interpreting them as teaching principles. (4) Assisting agents in adopting information gained from extension research through the conduct of the program in the counties. (5) Obtaining recognition of extension work as a profession. (6) Stimulating professional improvement of agents.

Mr Sheffield also discussed the supplementary 25-million-dollar cotton reduction program and the 3 million dollars made available for cash payments to encourage additional food production and storage for home use, and told how farmers might qualify for both programs.

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H. H. Williamson, director of extension, Texas, then addressed the group:

"If we can adjust our agriculture around a 12,000,000-bale cotton crop we can adjust our economic procedure around that. Our export market is gone. Can we consume 12,000,000 bales domestically? I

believe so. Our regular consumption would take about 8,000,000 bales. The cotton-mattress program can use 500,000 bales annually, for a while. The cotton stamp plan should use 1,000,000 bales annually. With substitute jute and other items, we could use another 1,000,000 bales.

"If through education we could get increased consumption from persons other than those who qualify for the stamp plan, we ought to be able to use the balance available. I would advocate subsidizing home consumption rather than subsidizing export markets. There are two important things we must do: (1) We must get people qualified for the stamp plan; and (2) we must educate people to use this material, and educate people in how to get the most for the stamps. This is our biggest opportunity in a good many years."

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At this point, Mr. Brigham said: "Our export market is gone because of (1) Cheaper foreign production, (2) foreign countries haven't the money to buy cotton. It is better to get used to not having foreign consumption; and it is easier to adjust our production up than it is to adjust it down."

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J. B. Pierce, field agent, Extension Service, with headquarters at Hampton Institute, addressed the group on Organizing for Extension Work.<sup>1/</sup>

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#### Looking Backward and Forward in Extension Work

P. O. Davis  
Director of Extension, Alabama

Extension is the biggest step, the highest form, and the biggest approach of any education yet developed. In the early years, or until action agencies began, the small demonstration was used as a method of approach. Since 1933, through the action agencies, we have been dealing with emergencies and, along with them, carrying on our regular educational program.

There is a need for closer coordination of all action agencies with the Extension Service, working on one program toward the same goal. Two essentials of success are a good farm and a good farm home, both making a unit. We need to give more attention to the useful social sciences. We have learned to utilize the natural sciences, and now we must learn to use the social sciences to help us put over our program.

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1/ U. S. Dept. Agr. Ext. Serv. Cir. 358. 3 pp. Washington, D. C.  
April 1941. (Mimeographed).

The program we should follow in the South is to add livestock to food and feed stuffs, and cash crops, and the development of forestry at home. It is important to get our information applied by persons for whom it is intended. We need to strengthen our agricultural unit if we are going to have a stronger America.

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How To Reach and Influence Farm People More Effectively Through  
a Better-Farm-Family-Living Program

D. W. Watkins  
Director of Extension, South Carolina

The publicity program does not reach the people who need a program of live-at-home most. Those who can read, or travel are using at least some phases of the program.

Suggestions: (1) Each specialist should put in writing the core and heart of his particular line. Develop publications for the general run of farm people over a period of time; use numerous practical illustrations which are suggested; use the garden letter by specialists every month in the year. (2) Develop all cash crops to highest possible point. After emphasizing economical production, shift emphasis of the result demonstration to the production of what the farmer can use. "Cotton money" will only buy corn bread, fat meat, and molasses. This necessitates going without items necessary for a balanced diet.

There are a number of landowners whose attitude toward live-at-home programs for tenants is "defeatist". We should get these landowners to permit or influence tenants and sharecroppers to live at home.

One hundred of the better cases of landlord-tenant relationships were studied to see why they were better. It was found that they were better because (1) the land was better, resulting in better crops, gardens, incomes, etc.; and (2) careful farm management was emphasized on these farms. In our efforts to solve this problem, we made three approaches: (1) The landlord-tenant approach. (2) The 75 percent program. We do not have enough leaders. It is necessary to have the help of volunteer, unpaid leaders on a county or community basis. South Carolina invites all farm families to produce 75 percent of their needs on the farm, and certificates are to be given to those completing. A score card was worked out for scoring these farms. (3) The deficiency approach. Farmers are not growing enough of things they need to run the farm. A deficiency survey shows that owners and others, both white and colored, are doing just about the same thing. All run very short of a number of things they ought to be producing.

At this point Miss Mildred F. Horton, vice director of the Texas Extension Service, was introduced to the group. She said that she had enjoyed the meeting, and that the Negro workers helped them to keep their feet on the ground in Texas. She gave some suggestions as follows: (1) Live with the people you are working with. (2) Talk their language. (3) Consider their mental ability, financial ability, and the like. (4) Extension workers don't know everything; get the right mixture of a farmer's practical knowledge with your expert knowledge. (5) Help leaders to help others in a community.

Miss L. I. Landrum, State home demonstration agent, South Carolina, was introduced to the group. She said: "We are trying to practice what Dr. Knapp said in the early days 'Your value is not what you can do, but what you can get others to do.'"

J. A. Evans, administrative assistant, Georgia Extension Service, was introduced. He said: "There is no Negro extension work. There is only one Extension Service. It is service to the rural people, without regard to race, creed, or anything else. There should be no separation. White agents need some of the things Negro agents say they need. The thing for us to do is to consider how, with what we have, can we do a better job? How can we extend the benefits of the program to Negro low-income groups in counties where there are no Negro agents? This can be done through closer coordination of our present forces."

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Afternoon Session - Tuesday, February 4

Panel Discussion: J. L. Charity, Virginia, presiding

How We Are Expanding and Improving 4-H Club Work

In a panel discussion led by Mrs. Marian Paul, State home demonstration agent for South Carolina; Bessie Walton, assistant State home demonstration supervisor, and Alexander Hurne, State 4-H Club agent, Georgia, the subject, How We Are Expanding and Improving 4-H Club Work, was considered.

Emphasis was placed on proper organization and organized growth of club work. Club work should be expanded to broaden the needs of older youth; and a greater choice of projects, adapted to local needs and skills, would promote even greater interest in club work. Banks are willing to finance sound projects along these lines.

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What Can Extension Do in Carrying Out a Rural Housing and Equipment Program?

A discussion led by T. M. Campbell,  
Extension Service Field Agent, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama

Recommendations were made as follows:

1. Every agent should want to make housing an integral part of the extension program.
2. Secure the services of a competent and trained builder or architect to be responsible for technical phases of this work, in an advisory capacity.
3. Work through landowners to provide better housing for renters, sharecroppers, and day laborers.
4. Make this a demonstration program.
5. Build new homes, remodel or replace old homes, including screens, fences, roofs and the like, and sanitary toilets.
6. Improve the housing of rural folk if we are to keep rural boys and girls satisfied to stay in the country. (The largest group of our people such as renters, croppers, and day laborers live in houses over which they have no control.)
7. Establish each job as a result demonstration.
8. Establish as many demonstrations in as many groups as possible.
9. Establish schools for farmer-carpenters, that they may serve as leaders.

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Improving Extension Work

A discussion led by H. H. Williamson,  
Director of Extension, Texas

The extension agent should be able to direct the farmer to whatever specialty that can help him most. It is necessary for the workers to stay close to the people in their personal relationships, food problems, and in financing the work.

J. C. Barnett, district agent, Arkansas, was prevented from attending the meeting. He was scheduled to lead a discussion on retirement for Negro agents. J. C. Ford, coordinator, Alabama Extension Service, substituting for Mr. Barnett, told how the retirement plan in Alabama is expected to work.

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Morning Session, Wednesday, February 5

M. M. Hubert, district agent, Mississippi, presiding

Giles A. Hubert, Farm Security Administration, Washington, D. C., gave some interesting facts relative to the needs of Southern farmers, and some possible solutions to problems faced by them.

Because of the cotton meeting called in Washington, I. W. Duggan, Director, Southern Division, AAA, was unable to attend the meeting as scheduled, but was represented by C. A. Cobb of Atlanta, and C. G. Walker of the AAA, Washington, D. C., both of whom discussed problems of adjustment in agriculture.

Mr. Cobb advised the group to be continually on guard against subversive influences in the communities in which they work, saying, "The leaders of both white and colored people owe a debt to society to lead both races in peace and harmony." He urged the group to prepare their people to face problems close upon us.

Mr. Walker stated that in agriculture we have 25 percent of the total population, which received only 8 percent of the total appropriation in 1939; that it is necessary to maintain the gains agriculture has made until the present emergency has passed; and that it is also necessary that more farmers should cooperate instead of merely participating in the program.

J. C. Ford, coordinator, Alabama Extension Service, told how problems of relationship with other agencies, problems of coordination, and how to meet increasing demands being made daily on extension workers were being studied in Alabama. Representatives from other States discussed the procedures being used in their States.

E. E. Scholl, director of extension, Oklahoma, was presented to the group. He said, among other things: "We have learned from Dr. Knapp to keep our feet on the ground and present our work in the most practical manner."

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Afternoon Session, Wednesday, February 5

E. A. Miller, assistant to the Director, Southern Division, AAA, presiding

What the AAA Program Has Meant to Me as a Farmer

With J. H. Shoulders, of the AAA, Washington, D. C., leading the discussion, farmers from 16 States gave ideas on what the AAA program has meant to them as farmers. All expressed gratification that it has helped to increase cash income, increase fertility and productivity of the soil, and make more gardens and better homes.

The farmers stated that through their Negro county agents they have been able to keep up with the program and comply with qualifications. A summary of some reports by farmers follows:

James E. Pettaway, Texas. By cooperating with the AAA through my county agent, I began to increase my cash income to the point where I was able to pay all my debts, set up a bank account, and live at home with a balanced diet, a full pantry, and smokehouse.

W. C. Matthews, Virginia. The AAA has doubled the income for farmers in our community. We cooperate through our home and farm agents. All in my community have gardens.

Marion Reed, Missouri. Our pleasure and satisfaction in farming as well as my cash income and soil fertility, have been greatly increased. In numerous ways, my tenant has been even more benefitted than I.

E. W. Lawrence, South Carolina. Cash income and soil fertility have greatly increased. I have been able to replace all my old farm tools with new ones. I am able to have a better balanced diet. Many homes have been remodeled and replaced. God bless the AAA.

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The Negro Farmer and National Defense

Dr. E. D. Patterson,  
President, Tuskegee Institute

Behind the effort of Government and leaders in national defense you have a united people, Negro and white, in this great effort. In proportion as we prepare each of the groups - farmers and industry, - in both races, in that same proportion are we preparing for a total national defense and democratic way of life. It is necessary to get all farmers, colored and white, to appreciate and cooperate with the agencies trying to adjust our farming practices and economics to the changing status of agriculture in the international picture.

Problems faced by farmers today are: (1) Diversification; (2) cotton economy and satisfactory substitute; (3) overpopulation of rural areas; (4) poor housing; (5) poor health, resulting in many lost days of labor, and money.

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During the afternoon, Reuben Brigham, Dr. Patterson, C. G. Walker, T. M. Campbell, and P. H. Stone made an instantaneous transcription which was broadcast over the regular farm program from WSB.

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Morning Session - Thursday, February 6

James P. Davis, field officer, AAA, presiding

How Extension Workers Have Used the AAA Program Provisions in Reaching Their Objectives

Chas. A. Sheffield  
Field Agent, Federal Extension Service

It is necessary to understand the workings and mechanics of the program in order to administer it properly. The cotton reduction program has left land available for gardens, poultry, and pastures for livestock. It has also left time for people to attend meetings. The cotton mattress program has helped the club enrollment in some cases as much as 50 percent. This has also contributed to better homes and better farm living.

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National Drive To Improve Nutrition and Health

M. L. Wilson  
Director of Extension Work

We are aware of the great conflict in the world at the present time between the totalitarian and democratic ideas, as a result of which there has come in this country a great activity which we call national defense. It has been here for several months, and we of the Western Hemisphere are using all our energy to defend our way of life, and those things which make life worth while. Defense in modern times involves the health and ability of the entire population. For that reason, last summer when the President issued an order, some consideration was given to what might be called total defense, or to the ability of those of us who would not be in training camps to make a contribution to the Nation. That means, everyone should be in the best physical condition.

Dr. Byrd was given the responsibility of organizing such an activity concerned with the security of families. I was asked to be chairman of the committee which had as its purpose assisting people with improving the nutrition status of their communities. As a layman and not as a scientist I have been impressed by the great advance science has made. Many are impressed with the fact that food will win the war. The problem now is to give all people of the country the scientific principles that have been developed in nutrition, so as to bring up the health and the ability of all the people who are not properly nourished.

There are two aspects involved: (1) What the diet should be in terms of modern science to give great health; (2) how can we organize the farmers and the way of living so that many of these foods can be produced on our farms in order that all of us may have a good diet?

We have given a great deal of time to the soil in past years, and nearly all extension programs have consisted of educational activities. All the people in educational activity in the South are really going to do something in a very big way in an effort to solve this nutrition problem.

With reference to "human erosion," a committee has been organized in Washington, D. C., to bring together the findings and results of science. We are trying to combat "human erosion" due to poor nutrition by education, both through schools and the Extension Service.

I think we can make the best use of the time we have allotted to us by calling on several people to talk on the science of nutrition.

At this point Director Wilson presented Dr. McLester of Birmingham.

Dr. McLester: "Poor nutrition is often responsible for the condition or attitude called 'shiftlessness.' In making financial arrangements, the lending agency often wants to know how much cotton is going to be planted, leaving little or no land for gardening, chickens, pastures, and other farm pursuits. The remedy for this is education. Teach, first, appreciation for a properly balanced diet. Second, teach cooking."

At this point Director Wilson presented Dr. Wilder, chairman of the National Food and Nutrition Committee. Dr. Wilder told of the efforts that are being made to remedy evil effects of malnutrition due to the lack of important vitamins.<sup>2/</sup>

2/ Russell M. Wilder. Enriched Flour and Enriched Bread. Address before a joint meeting of bakers and millers in Chicago, Ill., March 5, 1941. Extension Service, United States Department of Agriculture. No. 422-41. Mimeographed.

Dr. Louise Stanley, Chief of the Bureau of Home Economics, Washington, D. C., stated that studies indicate that about one-third of the total population have deficiencies of diet. These studies also indicate that families who raise their meat, milk, and vegetables have a good diet, but when they have to buy their food, they buy the cheapest diet possible fat-back, and the like, thus resulting in deficient diet.

Dr. Maynard, Cornell University: "We need to pay more attention to nutrient yields, rather than tons per acre."

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Afternoon Session - Thursday, February 6

Mrs. Jennie B. Moton, AAA, presiding

W. N. Elam conducted a round-table discussion by Negro teacher trainers and vocational agriculturists on How Vocational Agriculture Teachers Have Used the Provisions of the AAA Program in Reaching Their Objectives. It was generally agreed that the provisions are beneficial and have served as useful mediums through which to spread better practices in agriculture and home economics.

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#### Long-Range Farm Problems

F. C. Clark  
Agricultural Adjustment Administration

Problems developed by round-table discussion were: (1) Poor soil; (2) landlord tenant relationships; (3) poor health; (4) low income; (5) lack of educational opportunities; (6) density of farm population; (7) poor housing; (8) lack of proper land use; (9) lack of markets; (10) lack of food and feed; (11) inadequate livestock; (12) laziness; (13) continuous discouragement; and (14) high and fixed prices for things farmers must buy.

In this discussion T. M. Campbell called attention to the ever-present problem of migration and the changing status of many Negro sharecroppers and tenants to day laborers and wage hands.

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Morning Session - Friday, February 7

A. L. Holsey, field officer, AAA, presiding

T. L. Ayers, of the AAA, Washington, D. C. led a panel discussion on How the AAA Program Provisions May Be Used To Solve Long-range Farm Problems. Following this discussion, reports were made by group conferences on:

1. Methods by which agricultural extension workers may use the AAA provisions in reaching their objectives.
2. Methods by which home demonstration extension workers may use the AAA provisions in reaching their objectives.
3. How vocational agriculture teachers may use the AAA provisions in reaching their objectives.
4. The place of farm leaders in carrying on the AAA program.

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Report by Extension Workers

First, we want to thank the Department of Agriculture through the Extension and AAA officials and the various State directors for arranging and calling this meeting of Negro agricultural workers.

This series of conferences has not only given us a chance to know many of the national and State leaders, but it has permitted a better acquaintance and a finer relationship of the field forces, a better chance as well as a broader understanding of how we can best serve during this national emergency. We are conscious of the trying days ahead when sacrifices, taxes, extra efforts, and inconveniences may be needed as the price of national defense.

As a result of this conference, we go back to our work to urge immediate action among our people to make full use of the cotton stamp plan and of the numerous aids offered through the AAA to bring about the more abundant life for which we have worked and prayed for 25 years.

In this connection, we propose to make use of these provisions as follows:

1. An adequate supply and variety of home-raised foods and feed for our farm families is one of our oldest and most important extension objectives. To this end we shall urge through our farmer, farm-women, and 4-H Club meetings and through the operation of the allotment act and the cotton stamp plan, the production of vegetables and other needed food and feed crops.

2. In order to provide for adequate livestock we plan, in the same way, to influence the use of grants-of-aid to provide the limestone or basic slag or acid phosphate and seeds to grow pastures and supplementary grass crops to maintain these farm animals.
3. A better balanced system of farming has long been a crying need here in the Cotton Belt. Therefore we shall reemphasize the explanation of the spirit of the AAA program.
4. Better homes represent a basic need for all people. In this direction we shall continue to encourage and push the mattress- and comfort-making programs.
5. To continue the all-important matter of soil building, we propose to use the soil conservation plan of the AAA program as our main weapon in this basic objective.
6. The problem of low farm income which has served to retard farm ownership, home improvement, educational progress, and general rural development, has been one of our biggest obstacles. Through the various payments, grants, and aids possible through the AAA, we propose to emphasize how the normal farm expenditures for food and feed and certain items of home furnishings and clothing may be eliminated and the savings thus gained transferred to net cash income.

Again we express our appreciation for the opportunities which this conference has presented to us.

Respectfully submitted,

P. H. Stone,  
Chairman.

Atlanta, Georgia  
Friday, February 7, 1941  
Ballroom - The Savoy Hotel

WHEREAS this Conference of Negro Agricultural Workers has been the means of bringing together the most representative group of persons ever gathered to consider the problems of the rural Negro,

BE IT RESOLVED that we, here assembled petition those in authority to consider calling a southwide conference on the problems of the rural Negro each year, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that such a conference be held in the same city and at the same time as that of the Annual Association of Southern Agricultural Workers.

Respectfully submitted,

THE COMMITTEE

